Amendments to the Specification:

At page 4, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 1 as follows:

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, 4-fluorophenyl magnesium bromide and 3-dimethylaminopropyl magnesium chloride are employed; furthermore, said acid having a pK comprised between 0 and 3 is preferably ortho phosphoric acid. According to a preferred way to proceed, the process according to the invention is carried out in "one pot", without isolating the intermediate products until obtainment of citalopram.

At page 4, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 7 as follows:

The reaction is preferably carried out in an organic polar aprotic solvent, preferably tetrahydrofuran and/or toluene. In practice, the Grignard solution is prepared by adding a solution of 4-fluorobromobenzene in said organic polar aprotic solvent (preferably tetrahydrofuran and/or toluene) to magnesium turnings in the presence of traces of iodide at solvent reflux temperature (at 50[[÷]] to 70°C, preferably 70°C for tetrahydrofuran) and cooling to room temperature, after about 30 minutes. Separately a solution of ethylbromide in the same organic solvent is added to magnesium turnings in presence of traces of iodide at solvent reflux temperature; maintaining the mixture at this temperature, 3-dimethylaminopropyl chloride is added to the same solvent, reflux is maintained for further thirty minutes, then it's cooled to room temperature. The two solutions are then mixed together at room temperature.

At page 4, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 19 as follows:

The mixture is added to a 5-cyanophthalide suspension in the same organic polar aprotic solvent, preferably tetrahydrofuran, at –20[[÷]]

to +20°C, preferably at -10[[÷]] to 0°C. The reaction is usually finished at the end of the addition.

At page 4, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 19 as follows:

The acid having a pK comprised between 0 and 3, preferably ortho-phosphoric acid, is then added to the reaction mixture at -10[[÷]] to +20°C, preferably at 0[[÷]] to +10°C; the mixture is then heated to 55[[÷]] to 85°C, preferably to about 65°C, in order to distill all the tetrahydrofuran. At the end of the distillation, the mixture is kept at 60[[÷]] to 90°C, preferably at 70[[÷]] to 80°C for 1[[÷]] to 3 hours, preferably for about two hours, to give citalopram.

At page 5, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 19 as follows:

The acid having a pK comprised between 0 and 3, and in particular the ortho phosphoric acid, is normally used at a concentration between 55 and 95% by weight, a concentration of about 85% being particularly preferred.

At page 5, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 31 as follows:

53.5 g of magnesium turnings (2.2 mol) and 0.3 g of iodide are charged into a 4-litres reactor at room temperature under nitrogen. The mixture is then heated to 70°C and a solution of 369.5 g (2.11 mol) of 4-fluorobromobenzene in 1960 ml tetrahydrofuran (5.3 volumes on 4-fluorobromobenzene) is added drop wise, in one hour. After addition the mixture is heated to reflux temperature (68[[÷]] to 70°C) for 30 minutes, then it's cooled to 25°C.

At page 6, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:

39.22 g (1.61 mol) of magnesium turnings [[e]] and 0.3 g of iodide are charged into a 2-liters reactor at room temperature under nitrogen. The mixture is then heated to 70°C and a solution of 4.53

ml (0.061 mol) of ethylbromide in 72 ml of tetrahydrofuran is added drop wise in 15 minutes. The reaction is quickly seeded. A solution of 208.77 g (1.90 mol) of dimethylaminopropyl chloride in 545 ml of tetrahydrofuran is added drop wise. After addition the mixture is heated to reflux temperature (68[[÷]] to 70°C) for 30 minutes, then it's cooled to 25°C.

At page 6, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 21 as follows:

The resulting mixture is then added in about 2 hours to a mixture of 100 g (0.63 moles) of 5-cyanophthalide in 750 ml of tetrahydrofuran, under nitrogen at -0[[÷]] to 0°C. After addition (see note 1), 550 ml of ortho-phosphoric acid 85% are added drop wise, keeping the temperature below 10°C. After addition the mixture is heated to 66°C and tetrahydrofuran is distilled; the mixture is then heated to 70[[÷]] to 80°C for 2 hours. The reaction is finished from HPLC control. 1100 ml of water and 650 ml of toluene are added.

At page 7, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:

177 g of crude citalopram obtained from the previous step are dissolved in 300 ml of acetone; it is cooled to 0[[÷]] to 5°C and about 30 ml of hydrobromic acid 62% are added ~~till~~ until pH 1. The suspension is stirred at 0[[÷]] to 5°C for one hour and the solvent is then evaporated under vacuum. 200 ml of acetone are added and the solvent is evaporated under vacuum at 40°C; 250 ml of acetone are added and the suspension is stirred at 0[[÷]] to 5°C for a night. The panel is washed with 3x50 ml of acetone at 0[[÷]] to 5°C. The crude citalopram bromhydrate is dried under vacuum at 60°C.

At page 9, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 15 as follows:

16.6 g of crude citalopram obtained from the previous step are dissolved in 44 ml of 1M HCl solution in methanol the pH is adjusted to 1. The

solution is evaporated and methylisobutylketone (MIBK) (80 ml) is added, the solution is cooled to O°C. The solid is filtered off and washed (2[[*]] x 50 ml) with MIBK and acetone.

At page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 3 as follows:

2 g of 4-(4-dimethylamino)-1-(4'-fluorophenyl)-1-(hydroxybuthyl)-3-(hydroxymethyl)benzonitrile (0.021 mol) are dissolved in 200 ml of THF; [[16,54]] 16.54 g of triphenylphosphine ([[0,0630]] 0.0630 mol) are added under vacuum to the solution under stirring. [[12,9]] 12.9 ml of ethyl azadicarboxylate (0.081 mol, equivalent to [[3,8]] 3.8 mol/mol of starting substrate) dissolved in 50 ml of THF are dropped at 0°C; 4.83 g of sodium tert-butylate are dropped (0.05 mol, equivalent to [[2,5]] 2.5 mol/mol of starting substrate) and the mixture is left overnight. The reaction is stopped by adding 70 ml of a solution of HCl 1N; after evaporation to residue, 150 ml of water and 150 ml of toluene are added and the phases are separated. 150 ml of toluene are added to the aqueous phase and the pH is brought to [[9,4]] 9.4 by adding aqueous NH_3 30%. The phases are separated, the organic phase evaporated, the residue is dissolved in 15 ml of acetone and addede with HBr 62% ~~till~~ until a pH of 1. It is filtered yielding 5 g of crude 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-1-(4'-fluorophenyl)-1-3-dihydroxybenzofurane-5-carbonitrile bromhydrate (I, citalopram).

At page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 3 as follows:

The solid is dissolved in 10 ml of demineralized water, heated and kept at room temperature overnight. [[3,5]] 3.5 g 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-1-(4'-fluorophenyl)-1-3-dihydroxybenzofurane-5-carbonitrile bromhydrate (I, citalopram) with a purity of 99.85% as determined by HPLC analysis.